623 Notables. The *Notables* were heads of lineages or large families, rich men, famous warriors, etc. They were usually middle aged or old, but age in itself brought little prestige and no authority.

646 Practically every village was divided into two or more political factions, which would oppose each other on principle. There was a great deal of petty politics and scheming for control. The *Andrianabony* family was always allied with some faction and would favor it when possible. Membership in factions seems to have always followed lineage lines and when the disputes became too acute the lineages making up the defeated faction might secede in a body and found a new village.

692 623 Matters of general policy, internal disputes and minor criminal cases were settled by the *Fokonolona* ("council"). Some informants said that membership in the *Fokonolona* was limited to *Notables*, others that it included the entire adult male population. The distinction is not an important one, for the meetings were always public and all villagers, including women, had the right to speak.

623 The proceedings of the *Fokonolona* were quite informal. The *Andrianabony* presided, but there were no rules of order, no minutes of previous meetings, and no proceedings for opening or closing the session. The meetings were called *kabary*, which is an exact equivalent of the term "palaver" as used on the west coast of Africa. It is a generic term for meetings, discussions, speeches, etc. The Malagasy love to talk and even small matters were made an excuse for hours of *kabary*, with a great flow of oratory. There was no voting nor, as far as I could learn, any other formal method of coming to a decision. The matter was thrashed out until it was felt that the whole group was in agreement. The *Andrianabony* might formally announce the decision, but even this was often thought unnecessary. In case of a deadlock, the meeting was adjourned and the *Notables* went into private caucus, reconvening when they had reached a compromise. In all matters the majority ruled, but it had to be a large majority.

648 The *gens* as a whole had a chief, called the *Andrianabony*, who was chosen by an assembly of the *Andrianabony* and *Notables* from all the villages. Theoretically, he was chosen on the same personal basis as the *Andrianabony* and might be picked from any village or lineage. Actually, favor was shown to the lineages which were in the most direct line of descent from the *gens* ancestor, i.e., traced from him through eldest sons, and which lived in the original village of the *gens*. There also seems to have been a tendency for the office